UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FIFTY-SECOND SESSION

Official Records

THIRD COMMITTEE
2nd meeting
held on
Friday, 19 September 1997
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 2nd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. BUSACCA (Italy)

CONTENTS

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of the publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.3/52/SR.2
2 October 1997
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

97-81880 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

1. The CHAIRMAN said that the issues addressed by the Third Committee had become more and more central to the life of the United Nations, which was undergoing a reform process. Plenary meetings of the General Assembly on 16 and 17 October would consider the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development (the Committee would therefore suspend its work for those two days), but the Committee would examine important reports by the Secretary-General on the social conditions of particular sectors of the world's population and conduct a fresh assessment of the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women. It would also, inter alia, discuss international drugs control and take part in preparations for the 1998 special session of the General Assembly devoted to the problem of drugs; in that context, it would be addressed by the new Director of the United Nations Office at Vienna. The Committee's work could also include dialogues with the High Commissioner for Refugees and the new High Commissioner for Human Rights.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

2. The CHAIRMAN said that the Group of Asian States and the Group of African States had nominated Mr. Choe Myong Nam (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) and Mr. Karim Wissa (Egypt) for the offices of Vice-Chairmen.

3. Mr. Choe Myong Nam (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) and Mr. Wissa (Egypt) were elected Vice-Chairmen by acclamation.

4. The CHAIRMAN said that the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States had nominated Ms. Mónica Martínez (Ecuador) for the office of Rapporteur.

5. Ms. Martínez (Ecuador) was elected Rapporteur by acclamation.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK (A/52/250; A/C.3/52/L.1 and Add.1; A/C.3/52/1)

6. The CHAIRMAN invited delegations to give careful consideration to the action taken by the General Assembly based on the recommendations contained in the report of the General Committee relating to the organization of the work of the General Assembly and its Main Committees (A/52/250), for the degree to which the Committee would be able to implement those decisions would establish how well it would discharge its work programme.

7. The letter from the President of the General Assembly containing the list of agenda items allocated to the Committee would be issued as document A/C.3/52/1.

8. The General Assembly had decided to consider agenda item 46, on the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development, directly in plenary meetings and would take action on the item also at a plenary meeting.

9. Friday, 28 November had been set as the deadline for conclusion of the work of the Main Committees, and the President of the General Assembly intended to ensure that the deadline was met. He called upon members to cooperate in order to enable the Committee to meet the deadline.

10. He announced that the meeting would be suspended to enable members of the Committee to hold an informal meeting to consider the provisional programme of work and the status of documentation.

The meeting was suspended at 3.20 p.m. and resumed at 3.40 p.m.

11. The CHAIRMAN suggested that, in order to make the best use of the services available to the Committee, it should respect as much as possible the timetable to be adopted. It was of particular importance that draft resolutions which generally involved lengthy negotiations should be drafted by the main sponsors as early as possible and that deadlines should be strictly adhered to.

12. He asked that delegations wishing to present proposals concerning questions requiring action by the Committee should so inform the Secretary, to enable her to draw up a list of those initiatives for the benefit of all delegations wishing to support and participate in the work from its inception.

13. He invited the Committee to adopt the programme of work contained in document A/C.3/52/L.1.

14. The programme of work (A/C.3/52/L.1) was adopted.

15. The CHAIRMAN suggested that a time limit of seven minutes should be adopted for individual statements and those of the Secretariat, and 15 minutes for statements made on behalf of a group of delegations.

16. It was so decided.

17. The CHAIRMAN said that, pursuant to decision 34/401, the number of interventions in the exercise of the right of reply for any delegation was limited to two per agenda item; the first such intervention should not exceed five minutes, and the second, three minutes. Delegations should exercise their right of reply at the end of the day when two meetings on that day had been devoted to the consideration of the same item. Interventions on points of order would also be limited to five minutes.

18. Delegations were required to bring at least 20 copies of any statement to be delivered, for distribution to the interpreters, précis-writers and Department of Public Information staff. As for statements made from handwritten notes, delegations should provide copies, even if they were rough notes, to the précis-writers in order to facilitate their work.

19. Delegations were requested to put their names down as early as possible on the list of speakers for all of the items on the agenda. Delegations would make their statements at the scheduled meetings and in the order in which they were listed to speak.

20. He took it that the Committee wished to invite the Rapporteurs and Special Representatives to present their reports to the Committee during the current session.

21. It was so decided.

22. The CHAIRMAN said the General Assembly had decided that the quorum rule would no longer be applied, and that meetings would begin at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. precisely.

23. Ms. KIRSCH (Luxembourg), speaking on behalf of the European Union, expressed the hope that in future a way could be found to reflect reality better than the artificial division of an issue into a number of agenda items. The European Union would therefore make only one statement on social development and one on women's issues. It was also regrettable that the issue of children's rights had been separated from that of human rights. She hoped that the agreed programme of work and timetable would be respected; the Journal should announce visits by Special Rapporteurs, and documentation should be produced on time in all the official languages so that delegations could prepare for the general debate and for negotiations. Her delegation would have preferred that the item entitled "Towards a culture of peace" had been kept on the agenda of the Third Committee, rather than being discussed in plenary meetings of the General Assembly. Failing that, her delegation requested that members of the Third Committee should be enabled to take part in that discussion, and that the latter should be held, for example, in early December when the Committee had completed its work.

The meeting rose at 3.45 p.m.